

111TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1612

To amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service-learning opportunities on public lands, help restore the Nation's natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, and scenic resources, train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts, and promote the value of public service.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 19, 2009

Mr. GRIJALVA (for himself and Mr. RAHALL) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture and Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To amend the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 to expand the authorization of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, and the Interior to provide service-learning opportunities on public lands, help restore the Nation's natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, and scenic resources, train a new generation of public land managers and enthusiasts, and promote the value of public service.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Public Lands Service  
3 Corps Act of 2009”.

4 **SEC. 2. REFERENCE.**

5 A reference in this Act to “the Act” is a reference  
6 to the Public Lands Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1721  
7 et seq.; title II of Public Law 91–378).

8 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE PUBLIC LANDS CORPS ACT**  
9 **OF 1993.**

10 (a) NAME AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION CHANGES.—  
11 The Act is amended—

12 (1) by striking “Public Lands Corps” each  
13 place it appears and inserting “Public Lands Service  
14 Corps”;

15 (2) by striking “conservation center” each place  
16 it appears and inserting “residential conservation  
17 center”; and

18 (3) by striking “appropriate conservation  
19 projects” each place it appears and inserting “ap-  
20 propriate natural and cultural resources conservation  
21 projects”.

22 (b) FINDINGS.—Section 202(a) of the Act is amend-  
23 ed as follows:

24 (1) In paragraph (1), by striking “the natural  
25 and cultural” and inserting “natural and cultural”.

1           (2) In paragraph (2), by inserting “, cultural,  
2           historic, archaeological, recreational and scenic”  
3           after “Many facilities and natural”.

4           (3) By adding at the end the following:

5           “(4) Young men and women who participate in  
6           the rehabilitation and restoration of our nation’s  
7           natural, cultural, historic, archaeological, rec-  
8           reational, and scenic treasures will gain an increased  
9           appreciation and understanding of our public lands  
10          and of the value of public service, and are likely to  
11          become life-long advocates for those values.

12          “(5) The work of conservation corps can benefit  
13          communities adjacent to public lands, through im-  
14          provement of civic engagement and participation  
15          among corps participants and those they serve, im-  
16          proving student engagement, student achievement,  
17          graduation rates, and college attendance rates, and  
18          the improvement and rehabilitation of public assets,  
19          including parks, forests, trails, rivers, estuaries, and  
20          coastal and marine areas.”.

21          (c) PURPOSE.—Section 202(b) of the Act is amended  
22          as follows:

23               (1) In paragraph (3), by striking “natural re-  
24               sources” and inserting “natural, cultural, historic,  
25               archaeological, recreational and scenic resources”.

1           (2) In paragraph (4), by striking “and” at the  
2       end.

3           (3) By amending paragraph (5) to read as fol-  
4       lows:

5           “(5) instill in a new generation of young men  
6       and women from across the nation, including those  
7       from diverse backgrounds, the desire to seek careers  
8       in natural and cultural resource stewardship and  
9       public service by allowing them to work directly with  
10      conservation professionals in land management  
11      agencies; and”.

12          (4) By inserting after paragraph (5), the fol-  
13      lowing:

14          “(6) promote public understanding and appre-  
15      ciation of the mission and work of the federal land,  
16      coastal, and ocean management agencies.”.

17      (d) DEFINITIONS.—Section 203 of the Act is amend-  
18   ed as follows:

19          (1) By amending paragraph (1) to read as fol-  
20      lows:

21          “(1) APPROPRIATE NATURAL AND CULTURAL  
22      RESOURCES CONSERVATION PROJECT.—The term  
23      ‘appropriate natural and cultural conservation  
24      project’ means any project for the conservation, res-  
25      toration, construction, or rehabilitation of natural,

1 cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or sce-  
2 nic resources.”.

3 (2) By striking paragraph (8).

4 (3) By redesignating paragraphs (9), (10),  
5 (11), (12), and (13) as paragraphs (8), (9), (10),  
6 (11), and (12), respectively.

7 (4) By amending paragraph (8) (as so redesign-  
8 nated) to read as follows:

9 “(8) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term ‘public lands’  
10 means any lands or waters (or interest therein)  
11 owned or administered by the United States, includ-  
12 ing those areas of coastal and ocean waters, the  
13 Great Lakes and their connecting waters, and sub-  
14 merged lands over which the United States exercises  
15 jurisdiction, except that such term does not include  
16 any Indian lands.”.

17 (5) In paragraph (9) (as so redesignated)—

18 (A) in subparagraph (B), by striking  
19 “and” at the end;

20 (B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the  
21 period and inserting “; and”; and

22 (C) by adding at the end the following:

23 “(D) makes available for audit for each fis-  
24 cal year for which the qualified youth or con-  
25 servation corps receives Federal funds under

1           this Act, all information pertaining to the ex-  
 2           penditure of the funds, any matching funds,  
 3           and participant demographics.”.

4           (6) In paragraph (11) (as so redesignated)—

5                 (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking  
 6                 “and” at the end;

7                 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the  
 8                 period and inserting “; and”; and

9                 (C) by adding at the end the following:

10                 “(C) with respect to the National Marine  
 11                 Sanctuary System, coral reefs, and other coast-  
 12                 al, estuarine and marine habitats, and other  
 13                 lands and facilities administered by the Na-  
 14                 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,  
 15                 the Secretary of Commerce.”.

16           (7) By adding at the end the following:

17                 “(13) RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION CEN-  
 18                 TERS.—The term ‘residential conservation centers’  
 19                 means the facilities authorized under section 205.

20                 “(14) CONSULTING INTERN.—The term ‘con-  
 21                 sulting intern’ means a consulting intern selected  
 22                 under section 205.”.

23           (e) PUBLIC LANDS SERVICE CORPS PROGRAM.—Sec-  
 24           tion 204 of the Act is amended as follows:

25                 (1) In subsection (a)—

1 (A) by striking “and the Department of  
2 Agriculture” and inserting “, the Department  
3 of Agriculture, and the Department of Com-  
4 merce”; and

5 (B) by adding at the end the following:  
6 “The Secretary of the Interior shall establish a  
7 department-level office to coordinate Public  
8 Lands Service Corps activities within the De-  
9 partment of the Interior. The Secretary of Agri-  
10 culture shall establish within the U.S. Forest  
11 Service an office to coordinate Public Lands  
12 Service Corps activities within that agency. The  
13 Secretary of Commerce shall establish within  
14 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-  
15 istration an office to coordinate Public Lands  
16 Service Corps activities within that agency. The  
17 Secretary of each department shall designate a  
18 Public Lands Service Corps coordinator for  
19 each agency within that department that ad-  
20 ministers eligible service lands.”.

21 (2) In subsection (b), by inserting “for a period  
22 of not more than 2 years” after “who are enrolled”.

23 (3) In subsection (c)—

24 (A) by striking “priority” each place it ap-  
25 pears;

1 (B) by redesignating paragraph (2) as  
2 paragraph (3); and

3 (C) by inserting after paragraph (1) the  
4 following:

5 “(2) RECRUITMENT.—The Secretary shall un-  
6 dertake, or contract for, a program to attract eligi-  
7 ble youth to the Corps by publicizing Corps opportu-  
8 nities through high schools, colleges, employment  
9 centers, and other appropriate institutions.”.

10 (4) By redesignating subsection (d) as sub-  
11 section (e).

12 (5) By inserting after subsection (c) the fol-  
13 lowing:

14 “(d) TRAINING.—The Secretary shall establish a  
15 training program based at appropriate residential con-  
16 servation centers or at other suitable regional Federal or  
17 other appropriate facilities or sites to provide training for  
18 Corps members. The Secretary shall—

19 “(1) ensure that the duration and comprehen-  
20 siveness of the training program shall be commensu-  
21 rate with the projects Corps members are expected  
22 to undertake;

23 “(2) develop department-wide standards for the  
24 program that include training in—

25 “(A) resource stewardship;



1 “(B) health and safety;

2 “(C) ethics for those in public service;

3 “(D) teamwork and leadership; and

4 “(E) interpersonal communications;

5 “(3) direct the National Park Service, the Bu-  
6 reau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and  
7 Wildlife Service in the case of the Department of the  
8 Interior, the U.S. Forest Service in the case of the  
9 Department of Agriculture, and the National Oce-  
10 anic and Atmospheric Administration in the case of  
11 the Department of Commerce, to develop agency-  
12 specific training guidelines to ensure that Corps  
13 members enrolled to undertake projects for a specific  
14 agency are appropriately informed about matters  
15 specific to that agency, including—

16 “(A) the history and organization of the  
17 agency;

18 “(B) the agency’s core values; and

19 “(C) any agency-specific standards for the  
20 management of natural, cultural, historic, ar-  
21 chaeological, recreational, and scenic resources;  
22 and

23 “(4) take into account training already received  
24 by Corps members enrolled from qualified youth or  
25 conservation corps.”.

1 (6) In subsection (e) (as so redesignated)—

2 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “The  
3 Secretary may utilize the Corps or any qualified  
4 youth or conservation corps to carry out appro-  
5 priate” and inserting “The Secretary may use  
6 the Corps or any qualified youth or conserva-  
7 tion corps to carry out, under appropriate su-  
8 pervision and training, appropriate natural and  
9 cultural resource”; and

10 (B) by striking “on public lands.” insert-  
11 ing the following: “on eligible service lands.  
12 Such projects may include, but are not limited  
13 to, the following:

14 “(A) Protection, restoration, or enhancement of  
15 ecosystem components to promote species recovery,  
16 improve biological diversity, enhance productivity  
17 and carbon sequestration, and enhance adaptability  
18 and resilience of public lands and resources in the  
19 face of climate change and other natural and human  
20 disturbances.

21 “(B) Promoting the health of forest and public  
22 lands and coastal and marine areas, including—

23 “(i) protection and restoration of water-  
24 sheds and forest, riparian, estuarine, grassland,  
25 coral reef, intertidal, or other habitat;

1                   “(ii) reduction of wildfire risk and mitiga-  
2                   tion of damage from insects, disease, and disas-  
3                   ters;

4                   “(iii) erosion control;

5                   “(iv) control or removal of invasive, nox-  
6                   ious, or non-native species; and

7                   “(v) restoration of native species.

8                   “(C) Collection of biological, archaeological, and  
9                   other scientific data, including monitoring of cli-  
10                  matological information, species populations and  
11                  movement, habitat status, and other factors.

12                  “(D) Assisting in historical and cultural re-  
13                  search, museum curatorial work, oral history  
14                  projects, documentary photography, and activities  
15                  that support the creation of public works of art re-  
16                  lated to public lands.

17                  “(E) Construction, repair, rehabilitation and  
18                  maintenance of roads, trails, campgrounds, and  
19                  other visitor facilities, and employee housing, his-  
20                  toric sites and structures, and facilities that further  
21                  the purposes of the Public Lands Service Corps.”.

22                         (C) By redesignating paragraphs (2) and  
23                         (3) as paragraph (4) and (5), respectively.

24                         (D) By inserting after paragraph (1) the  
25                         following:

1 “(2) VISITOR SERVICES.—The Secretary may—

2 “(A) enter into or amend an existing coop-  
3 erative agreement with a cooperating associa-  
4 tion, educational institute, friends group, or  
5 similar non-profit partner organization for the  
6 purpose of providing training and work experi-  
7 ence to Corps members in areas including, but  
8 not limited to, sales, office work, accounting,  
9 and management provided that the work experi-  
10 ence directly relates to the protection and man-  
11 agement of the public lands; and

12 “(B) allow Corps members to help provide  
13 information and orientation services that pro-  
14 mote visitor safety and enjoyment of public  
15 lands, and assist in the gathering of visitor use  
16 data.

17 “(3) INTERPRETATION.—The Secretary may  
18 not assign Corps members to provide interpretation  
19 or education services for the public. However, under  
20 the direct and immediate supervision of an agency  
21 employee, Corps members may—

22 “(A) provide orientation and information  
23 services to visitors;

24 “(B) assist agency employees in the deliv-  
25 ery of interpretive or educational programs

1 where audience size, environmental conditions,  
2 safety, or other factors make such assistance  
3 desirable;

4 “(C) present programs that relate the per-  
5 sonal experience of the Corps member for the  
6 purpose of promoting public awareness of the  
7 Corps, its role in public land management agen-  
8 cies, and its availability to potential partici-  
9 pants; and

10 “(D) create non-personal interpretive prod-  
11 ucts, such as website content, Junior Ranger  
12 program books, printed handouts, and audio-  
13 visual programs.”.

14 (E) In paragraph (5) (as so redesignated),  
15 by striking “Appropriate conservation projects”  
16 and inserting “Appropriate natural and cultural  
17 resources conservation projects”.

18 (7) By adding at the end the following:

19 “(h) OTHER PARTICIPANTS.—The Secretary may  
20 allow volunteers from other programs administered by the  
21 Secretary to participate as volunteers in projects carried  
22 out under this section on such terms as the Secretary con-  
23 siderers appropriate.”.

1 (f) RESIDENTIAL CONSERVATION CENTERS AND  
2 PROGRAM SUPPORT.—Section 205 of the Act is amended  
3 as follows:

4 (1) In subsection (a)—

5 (A) by amending paragraph (1) to read as  
6 follows:

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Secretary may establish  
8 residential conservation centers for—

9 “(A) such housing, food service, medical  
10 care, transportation and other services as the  
11 Secretary deems necessary for the Public Lands  
12 Service Corps; and

13 “(B) the conduct of appropriate residential  
14 conservation projects under this Act.”;

15 (B) in paragraph (4), by striking “with  
16 State” and inserting “with another Federal,”

17 (C) by striking paragraph (2); and

18 (D) by redesignating paragraphs (3) and  
19 (4) as paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively.

20 (2) In subsection (b)—

21 (A) by striking “The Secretary” and in-  
22 serting the following:

23 “(1) The Secretary”; and

24 (B) by adding at the end the following:

1           “(2) The Secretary may make arrangements  
2           with other Federal agencies, States, local govern-  
3           ments, or private organizations to provide temporary  
4           housing as needed and available.

5           “(3) In project areas where Corps members can  
6           reasonably be expected to reside at their own homes,  
7           the Secretary may fund or provide transportation to  
8           and from project sites.”.

9           (3) By redesignating subsection (d) as sub-  
10          section (g).

11          (4) By inserting after subsection (c) the fol-  
12          lowing:

13          “(d) FACILITIES.—The Secretary may, as an appro-  
14          priate natural and cultural resources conservation project,  
15          direct Corps participants to aid in the construction of resi-  
16          dential conservation center facilities, including housing.

17          “(e) GREEN BUILDINGS.—The Secretary may seek  
18          the assistance of the Secretary of Energy in identifying  
19          and using solar and other green building technologies and  
20          modular housing designs that may be adapted for residen-  
21          tial conservation center facilities, including—

22                 “(1) designs from the Department of Energy’s  
23                 Solar Decathlon competition; and

24                 “(2) logistical support, assistance and training  
25                 from Solar Decathlon participants.

1       “(f) MENTORS.—The Secretary may recruit from  
2 programs, such as agency volunteer programs, and from  
3 veterans groups, military retirees, and active duty per-  
4 sonnel, such adults as may be suitable and qualified to  
5 provide training, mentoring, and crew-leading services to  
6 Corps participants.”.

7           (5) In subsection (g) (as so redesignated), by  
8 striking “that are appropriate” and all that follows  
9 through the period and inserting “that the Secretary  
10 determines to be necessary for the residential con-  
11 servation center.”.

12       (g) RESOURCE ASSISTANTS AND CONSULTING IN-  
13 TERNs.—Section 206 of the Act is amended as follows:

14           (1) In subsection (a), by striking “The Sec-  
15 retary is authorized, to provide individual place-  
16 ments of resource” and inserting the following: “The  
17 Secretary is authorized, to provide individual place-  
18 ments of the following:

19               “(1) Resource”.

20           (2) In subsection (a)(1) (as so designated), by  
21 striking “law, rule regulations” and inserting “laws,  
22 rules, or regulations”.

23           (3) By inserting after subsection (a)(1) (as so  
24 designated), the following:



1           “(2) Consulting interns with any Federal land,  
2           coastal, or ocean management agency under the ju-  
3           risdiction of the Secretary to carry out management  
4           analysis activities on behalf of the agency. To be eli-  
5           gible for selection as a consulting intern, an indi-  
6           vidual must be a current enrollee and have com-  
7           pleted at least one full year at a graduate or profes-  
8           sional school that has been accredited by an accred-  
9           iting body that has been recognized by the Secretary  
10          of Education. The Secretary may select consulting  
11          interns without regard to the civil service and classi-  
12          fication laws, rules, or regulations of the United  
13          States.”.

14               (4) In subsection (b)—

15                       (A) by striking “Whenever” and inserting  
16                       “(1) Whenever”; and

17                       (B) by adding at the end the following:

18                       “(2) Whenever one or more nonprofit organiza-  
19                       tions can provide, in the judgment of the Secretary,  
20                       appropriate recruitment and placement services to  
21                       fulfill the requirements of this section, the Secretary  
22                       may implement this section through such nonprofit  
23                       organizations. Participating nonprofit organizations  
24                       shall contribute to the expenses of providing and  
25                       supporting the consulting interns through private

1 sources of funding, at a level equal to 10 percent of  
2 the total costs of each participant in the consulting  
3 internship program who has been recruited and  
4 placed through that nonprofit organization. Any  
5 such participating nonprofit organization shall be re-  
6 quired, by the respective land, coastal, or ocean  
7 management agency, to submit an annual report  
8 evaluating the scope, size, and quality of the pro-  
9 gram, including the value of work contributed by the  
10 consulting interns, to the mission of the agency.”.

11 (h) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—The Act is amended  
12 by redesignating sections 207, 208, 209, 210, and 211 as  
13 sections 208, 209, 210, 211, and 212, respectively.

14 (i) GUIDANCE.—The Act is amended by inserting  
15 after section 206 the following:

16 **“SEC. 207. GUIDANCE.**

17 “Not later than 18 months after funds are made  
18 available for this purpose, the Secretaries shall issue  
19 guidelines for the management of the Public Lands Serv-  
20 ice Corps programs for use by regional and State direc-  
21 tors, and the supervisors of individual parks, forests, dis-  
22 tricts, sanctuaries, reserves, and refuges.”.

23 (j) LIVING ALLOWANCES AND TERMS OF SERVICE.—  
24 Section 208 of the Act (as so redesignated) is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (a), by adding at the end the  
2 following: “The Secretary may—

3 “(1) apply a cost-of-living differential to such  
4 allowances; and

5 “(2) reimburse Corps members for travel costs  
6 at the beginning and end of their term of service if  
7 the Secretary deems appropriate.”;

8 (2) in the heading of subsection (c), by adding  
9 at the end “PREFERENCE AND FUTURE EMPLOY-  
10 MENT”;

11 (3) in subsection (c)—

12 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “and” at  
13 the end;

14 (B) by amending paragraph (2) to read as  
15 follows:

16 “(2) provide to a former member of the Public  
17 Lands Service Corps noncompetitive hiring status  
18 for a period of not more than two years after the  
19 date on which the member’s service with the Public  
20 Lands Service Corps is complete, if the candidate—

21 “(A) has served a minimum of 960 hours  
22 on an appropriate natural or cultural resource  
23 conservation project that included at least 120  
24 hours through the Public Lands Service Corps;  
25 and

1 “(B) meets Office of Personnel Manage-  
2 ment qualification standards for the position to  
3 which the candidate is applying.”; and

4 (C) by adding at the end the following:

5 “(3) provide to an individual who has success-  
6 fully fulfilled the consulting internship program non-  
7 competitive hiring status for a period of not more  
8 than two years after the date on which the indi-  
9 vidual has completed a graduate degree from an ac-  
10 credited institution; and

11 “(4) provide, or enter into contracts or coopera-  
12 tive agreements with qualified employment agencies  
13 to provide, alumni services such as job and edu-  
14 cation counseling, referrals, verification of service,  
15 communications, and other appropriate services to  
16 members who have completed their Corps service.”.

17 (k) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Section  
18 212 of the Act (as so redesignated) is amended—

19 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “to carry out”  
20 and all that follows through the period and inserting  
21 “such sums as may be necessary to carry out this  
22 title”;

23 (2) by striking subsection (b); and

- 1           (3) by redesignating subsection (c) as sub-
- 2       section (b).

○